

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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report concerning Hungarian history between 1945 and 1949 and events in the Hungarian revolution of October-November 1956. The report also gives some general information on travel restrictions in Hungary prior to the revolution.

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The first ~~1~~ national Hungarian government was formed at the beginning of 1945 at Debreczen under the leadership of the Hungarian General VERES. Soon after there came a coalition government with seat in Budapest and Zoltan TILDEY as Prime Minister. The latter was a member of the Small ~~xxxx~~ Farmer's Party. Ferenc ERDEI, also of the Farmer's Party, was the first Minister of Interior Affairs, while Ferenc NAGY came into this first Cabinet as Minister of Reconstruction. [redacted]

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In November 1945 ERDEI was replaced as Minister of Interior Affairs by the Communist ~~xxx~~ RAJK.

In July 1946 the first Hungarian republic was set up. President of this republic

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was Zoltan TILDEY, and Ferenc NAGY was Prime Minister.

Ferenc NAGY also belonged to the Small Farmers' Party, which got about 67 per cent of all votes in the first elections held after the war.

Very quickly the Communists, with the support of the Russians, got more and more influence; they sought for an opportunity to shove Zoltan TILDEY aside. Finally the following club was found: a son-in-law of Zoltan TILDEY named Victor CSORNOKY-BUN was Ambassador [redacted] 25X1

Zoltan TILDEY was forced to resign. He was not arrested but was put under house arrest, which lasted until after the 20th Party Congress in Russia.

TILDEY was succeeded by the Social-Democrat Zoltan ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ RAKASITS, a fellow-traveler of the Communists.

Beside the Prime Minister Ferenc NAGY worked RAKOSI as deputy Prime Minister. RAKOSI was a strong Communist and First Secretary of the CP. In reality, he was the man who held the reins.

First Secretary of the Small Farmers' Party was Bela KOVACS, a very good friend ~~not~~ of Ferenc NAGY. This KOVACS was taken prisoner by the Russians in 1947 and deported to Russia. This was a sign to Ferenc NAGY to take to his heels as fast as possible. He went to Switzerland on vacation, so to speak, and did not come back. Immediately he was ~~arrested~~ pilloried by the Communist press as a reactionary and a capitalist sympathizer. 25X1

After this, on 21 August 1948, the organization of the Hungarian People's Republic took place. The first Prime Minister of the People's Republic, Lajos DINNYES, was not a Communist but belonged to the most extreme left wing of the Small Farmer's Party. He was a willing tool in the hands of the Communists.

Pather soon after he came to power, agreements were made with Russia and the other satellite countries, such as Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, etc. What was striking was that two or three months after the pact with Yugoslavia was made, Tito pulled down the displeasure of the Kremlin upon his neck and was booted out of the Cominform.

About March 1949 Lajos DINNYES was replaced by Istvan DOBI, who had also belonged to the left wing of the Small Farmers' Party. Obviously Lajos DINNYES could not be maintained in power because he was a big landowner and had extensive holdings ~~holdings~~ in the Budapest area. Istvan DOBI, on the contrary, came from the small farmers' class and thus was more acceptable. 25X1

After Ferenc NAGY had left [redacted] the Communists took power openly in Hungary. The Communist and the Social-Democratic Parties were merged, and the other parties gradually disappeared from the scene. Also the terror in Hungary began at that time.

The purge of higher officials also began. All the section chiefs of the departments were replaced by Communists or by people whom the Communists considered reliable.

When Istvan DOBI came to power in 1949, the purge of officials ~~continued~~ continued.

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They did not limit themselves then to the higher officials; all officials were now "purified." The Communists and those whose origins and attitudes were apparently not untrustworthy could remain.

Origin, above all, was important in this connection. An intellectual who came from the wealthier classes was immediately dismissed, but if an intellectual came from the workers' or farmers' class, that was different. 25X1

Subject's Part in the Revolution:

*Before the outbreak of the revolution there was no organized underground opposition to the regime in Hungary. True, the majority of the people were against the Russians and the Communist regime, but it ~~was~~ definitely was not possible to oppose in an organized way. After the 20th Party Congress in Moscow, where it was promised, among other things, that the satellite countries would get more freedom, and where the Russians swore off Stalinism, Hungary too seemed freer. The press turned strongly against Stalinism and everyone believed that everything would be better and the people would be freer. The events in Poland went along with this. Above all the intellectuals and students began to bestir themselves. Many intellectuals were members of the Petofi Club; in the months of September, October, and November 1956, this club held weekly meetings which were very heavily attended and at which criticism of the earlier Stalinist regime and the government was voiced. Some of these gatherings grew to be meetings attended by some thousands of persons. Also from the universities more open propaganda against Stalinism and RAKOSI was heard. Originally the propaganda was not openly directed at Russia, but ~~rather~~ there was insistence upon more freedoms, such as the free expression of opinion, freedom of the press, etc. ~~From~~ The Petofi Club put questions to the government, and the government admitted that various things were wrong. People in Hungary wondered why, whereas Stalinism had been deposed, RAKOSI remained in power; RAKOSI was known as a good pupil ~~of Stalin~~ and follower of Stalin. Indeed RAKOSI did step down, but he was succeeded by GERO, also a Stalinist, so that in reality nothing changed. The Petofi Club, whose ~~ex~~ members saw clearly that nothing had really been changed, reacted against this, and its meetings were forbidden for a ~~time~~ long time by GERO. Despite all this, there was no talk of any revolutionary movement, and there was no one in Hungary who had expected the outbreak of a revolution. 25X1

It was known that on 23 October the students were holding an orderly and peaceful demonstration. This demonstration was directed against Stalinism and requested more freedom. The demonstration, which originally was winked at by the authorities, was forbidden during the course of the day by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, but this ban was lifted after a short time. 25X1

What was remarkable was that after that permission was given to the workers to take part in the demonstration. the Party Secretary reported that everyone who wanted to do so could go out on the street to demonstrate. The fact that the demonstration was not originally directed against Russia appeared from the ~~motives~~ banners which were carried, some of which said: "Long live the new Hungarian-Russian friendship."

The demonstration lasted until evening, and at about 2000 hours the first Hungarian flags with the Kosmuth emblems appeared in the streets. A wave of emotion flooded through many. The demonstrators went to the Stalin Square, and then for the first time anti-Russian slogans were heard, while some people also tried

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to pull down the monument of Stalin. Soldiers and policemen had joined the demonstrators, and no on-duty police were present.

From the Stalin Square the crowd went to the Museum Street where the Radio Budapest building is. The demonstrators wanted access to the studio, but the AVH men on duty, who were guarding the place, prevented this.

In front of the studio there was a truck with AVH men, and this was the introduction to the first acts of violence. The AVH-ers were surrounded and there were shots.

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The next morning there were shots being fired all over Budapest, and the radio announced that the workers must not go to work but must peacefully remain at home to await further orders. On that day, too, the first Russian tanks appeared on the streets, and there was fighting in the streets everywhere. These fights lasted up to 25 October. Imre NAGY, who had succeeded GERO, stated that the weapons must be laid down. It then became rather peaceful; pre-war parties put out little newspapers in which demands were made upon the government and in which it was insisted upon that the Russian occupation should be ended. Almost everyone went back to work, but the political situation continued to change.

A central workers' council was chosen; also, workers' councils were chosen in the industries.

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It was the intention that from this council an executive committee would be chosen which would take over the direction of the industry. But it didn't come to this, in view of the fact that it had become 4 November and the Russians attacked Budapest.

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Imre Nagy had denounced the Warsaw treaty, and the people were of the opinion that the game had been won.

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A mood of panic dominated the place; there was no work done, and everyone spoke of the possibility of fleeing to the West. In the following weeks, too, practically no work was done, and because more people were fleeing all the time,

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~~Travel~~
Travel

Until 1948, traveling in Hungary was free from restrictions. After the break with Tito one could go to the Hungarian-Yugoslav border area without special permission. Soon afterwards this was expanded to include the Western border areas. In the first place, a strip of 500 meters along the border was forbidden to everyone. In addition, one was allowed to go into the border strip about 25 to 30 km. from the border only if he had a ~~pass~~ special permit. This permit had to be requested from the police of the place ~~where one lived~~ where one lived; it was given for family visits and business trips. One had to prove, however, that he had relatives ~~in the~~ or had to do business in the border strip.

On arrival at a place within the forbidden strip, one had to report to the green AVH, where the permit was sealed. The same thing took place when one left.

The checking of these regulations was very strict and was handled by the green AVH.

Up to the summer of 1956 the 500 meter strip, as well as having blockades, was very strictly guarded by the AVH. After that time the limitations applying to the border area became somewhat milder.

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~~Up to 1953-54 no one, with the exception of~~ up to 1953-54 no one, with the exception of official personalities, could go outside the country, even to Russia and the satellites. In 1954, for the first time, "fellowship" / "company" trips to the satellites were organized by the state travel office IBUSZ. A private trip to Russia was first possible in 1956, while trips to the West were organized in March 1956.

Up to June 1956 one needed a visa for trips to the satellites. ~~After that~~ that, traveling to these countries became very simple. One took his personal identity certificate to the travel office, where he got an entry paper, after which he could travel to the country concerned with no more trouble.

Buying motor vehicles etc.: Buying of bicycles and motorbikes is free in Hungary. However, it is a lot of trouble to get one; one had to be on a waiting-list for a long time because of the short supply.

For buying an auto, one must have a buying permit. Such a permit is given only to Party functionaries, higher officials, ~~doctors~~ doctors, and such persons.

Even with a permit it was not easy to get possession of a car since only a few are available. In the summer of 1956 this became somewhat easier because then many cars, brand-name Wartburg, were imported from East Germany. ~~These autos cost~~ These autos cost from 40 to 50 thousand florints.

Gasoline and oil were rationed and one got a gasoline card only if he had a permit for an auto.

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